

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ☐  
no ☐

Property Name: Sagal Rowhouses Inventory Number: B-5232  
Address: 512, 514, 516 and 518 N. Franklintown Road; 2801 and 2803  
Lauretta Avenue Historic district: X yes ☐ no ☐  
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21223-1018 County: Baltimore City  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West  
Property Owner: Scott Rill Tax Account ID Number: N/A  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 0000 Tax Map Number: 20  
Project: Red Line Project Agency: Maryland Transit Administration  
Agency Prepared By: Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Preparer's Name: Matt Manning Date Prepared: 10/1/2011  
Documentation is presented in: Enoch Pratt Library--Maryland Room, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Database, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps  
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended  
Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G  
*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*  
Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no ☐  
Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no ☐ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Architectural Description

The Sagal Rowhouses consist of six Italianate style rowhouses constructed in 1906. They are 512, 514, 516 and 518 Franklintown Road, and 2801 and 2803 Lauretta Avenue. The buildings are part of a small-scale, early twentieth century residential development at the intersection of Franklintown Road and Lauretta Avenue in Baltimore City. All have been altered by material replacement or deterioration, and are currently in poor condition.

The houses on Franklintown Road are two-story, two-bay residences with raised basements, and front porches. Constructed of brick and have brick facing, each is oriented on an east-west axis with an east-facing façade. The flat roofs have stepped parapets and are clad with built-up bituminous material. A continuous sheet-metal cornice crowns the roofline at the façade of all four buildings. Garlands and wreaths ornament the wide frieze. Each house appears to have two chimneys, although this could not be verified for 514 and 516 N. Franklintown Road. Except at the basement level, all window and door openings have brick segmental arches. All windows have marble sills. Each façade has a horizontal basement window, a single vertical window at the first floor,

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MHT Comments:

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Reviewer, National Register Program

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and two smaller vertical windows at the second floor.

The house at 512 N. Franklinton Road is currently abandoned, with the roof collapsed onto the second story. The front porch at its façade has a boarded-up single front door with transom accessed by concrete steps and a landing. The porch roof has been removed, leaving holes in the brick façade where the roof framing was located. The façade's first floor and basement window openings have been boarded-up. Broken double hung sash wood windows occupy the façade's second floor. The south elevation has two window openings; the smaller one no longer has its sash, but retains its wood frame, while a second larger one has vinyl-clad double-hung sash windows.

The house at 514 N. Franklinton Road has a single flush wood door, with a central diamond-shaped light. Sheltered by a metal storm door, the wood door has a large transom above, with a marble threshold below. The entrance is accessed by brick and concrete steps with a concrete landing. A simple aluminum railing borders the porch, and a combination of a classical wood column and decorative aluminum porch support carry the flat, wood-framed porch roof. All of the windows at this façade are vinyl clad, and the first floor window is located within the porch.

Unoccupied at the time of the site visit, the house at 516 N. Franklinton Road has a single paneled wood door with a boarded-up transom above, and a marble threshold below. The entrance is accessed by concrete steps with a concrete landing. A simple aluminum railing borders the porch, and a decorative aluminum porch support carries the flat, wood-framed porch roof. Most of the windows are vinyl clad, although the first floor window located within the porch and basement window are boarded-up.

The house at 518 N. Franklinton Road has a parapet with narrow metal coping. The house's front porch is enclosed, finished with a combination of brick and painted plywood, with vinyl cladding at the basement level below. Jalousie windows occupy the porch's north and east elevations. The porch is sheltered by a wood-framed roof. A wood door with a single light and a window with metal security bars are located within the porch. The entrance is accessed by concrete and brick steps leading up to what may be a tiled landing. The basement window at the façade is boarded-up, although a second basement window below the porch at the north elevation is vinyl-clad. The building's north elevation includes a boarded-up single door entrance with shed roof near the porch. There are also two bays of vinyl-clad windows, including two sliding-sash windows occupying the basement level. Each basement window has a tall one-over-one double-hung sash window at the first floor above. An identical window occupies the second floor's western bay, and two short, staggered sliding sash units are located in the eastern bay.

As with the façades, the N. Franklinton Road buildings' west (rear) elevations are two bays. Metal, wood, or concrete landings lead to the secondary first-floor entrances, with either metal, wood or no handrails. Each entrance consists of either a single wood door or this opening is boarded-up; each transom is filled in. Each building also includes a sunken basement entrance beneath the entrance landing. At each rear elevation, a large, one-over-one window is located next to the entrance, and two smaller windows occupy the second floor. Most of the windows are vinyl-clad and match those on the buildings' façades. However, all rear openings at both 512 N. Franklinton Road and the first floor of 516 N. Franklinton Road are either boarded-up or empty.

The two-story, three-bay residences with raised basements that directly front the sidewalk on Lauretta Avenue are both currently abandoned. Both have exterior walls constructed of brick and have brick facing, each oriented on a north-south axis with a north facing façade. The flat roofs have stepped parapets with narrow metal coping, and are clad with bituminous material. Both buildings have identical metal cornices as the ones present at 512-518 N. Franklinton Road. The residence at 2803 Lauretta Avenue has a brick chimney at its west elevation.

All the Lauretta Avenue buildings' window and door openings have brick segmental arches and marble sills. Concrete landings lead to boarded-up primary entrances at the building's shared wall at the façades. At both entrances, marble thresholds are still

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evident. Each façade's basement level includes two square window openings. Plywood sheathing covers these windows. Windows occupy most of the first and second floor bays at this elevation. The first floor windows are also covered by plywood. Vinyl siding frames the tops and bottoms of the window openings at 2801 Lauretta Avenue. This building's second story windows are one-over-one, double-hung sash wood units with broken glass; the spaces behind the windows have been covered with plywood. The house at 2803 Lauretta Avenue's second floor façade windows are either boarded-up or have broken wood sashes. The buildings have identically configured side elevations, each with three bays. The two northern bays comprise square, basement-level openings with taller, upper-floor window openings at each of the floors above. The southern bay only has the third-floor opening. Except for two vinyl-clad double-hung sash windows at 2801 Lauretta Avenue, these side elevation windows are covered with plywood.

The Lauretta Avenue buildings' south (rear) elevations have three bays. A sunken entrance and adjacent window occupy the exposed basement level. Concrete block fills 2801 Lauretta Avenue's basement-level openings. Plywood screens the basement entrance at 2803 Lauretta Avenue, and the adjacent window is a wood-framed sliding sash unit. Each main level includes an inaccessible central door, suggesting the removal of a rear porch. For both buildings, this entrance is flanked by two windows, one smaller than the other; plywood covers the openings. The third level has a single window opening adjacent to the buildings' shared wall. The window at 2801 Lauretta Avenue is uncovered, revealing double-hung sash windows.

#### Landscape/Setting

Small grass lawns front the N. Franklinton Road houses, with a concrete sidewalk running in front of the properties. A narrow tree lawn parallels the road. Although the buildings face east, N. Franklinton Road runs northwest-southeast; this configuration results in progressively smaller, angled front yards. The buildings' rear yards include small, concrete patios and grass lawns. The yards feature several large hardwood trees and remnants of chain-link fencing. Concrete walkways lead from the houses to an alley extending south from Lauretta Avenue.

The Lauretta Avenue buildings front directly on a concrete sidewalk abutting the street. Wood utility poles with streetlights stand within the sidewalk. The buildings have rear yards accessed via concrete alleys on the east and west. The yards are paved with concrete, much of which is cracked and broken.

The Sagal Rowhouses are located in an urban setting; one- to two-story commercial properties with expansive asphalt parking areas surround the buildings. Nearby businesses include filling stations, a bank, and various convenience stores. Two-story rowhouses on the other side of N. Franklinton Road to the east are part of the overlapping National Register listed Edmondson Avenue Historic District (B-5109) and National Register eligible Greater Rosemont Historic District (B-5112).

#### Historic Context

The Sagal Rowhouses were constructed in 1909 at a time when Baltimore's suburbs were rapidly expanding along new electric streetcar lines. This period of growth occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when a large area was annexed into the city in 1888, and another annex was approved in 1919. Large estates, formerly used by wealthy Baltimoreans as country homes, were divided into new suburban communities. Further west along Edmondson Avenue, free standing single-family residences arose in picturesque subdivisions such as Rognel Heights, Hunting Ridge, and Ten Hills. However, closer to the Baltimore city center, the developments were denser and consisted of rowhouses.

Such extensive development was possible because of the electric streetcar. In 1899, the United Railways and Electric Company extended an electric streetcar line west along Edmondson Avenue, connecting downtown Baltimore with Catonsville and Ellicott City. Traversing a "beautiful section of the country," the company expected the new line to be popular for pleasure rides. Instead

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Sagal Rowhouses

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the streetcars were a perfect pairing with suburban living, making neighborhoods along Edmondson Avenue ripe for new development. Working and middle class residents could now live in the more tranquil settings of the suburbs, but still have easy access to the Baltimore city center.

Before the start of World War I, many rowhouse builders had evolved into developers, building multiple blocks of identical housing and creating entire communities at once. These developers, and their large-scale communities, dominated suburban development in the early twentieth century. In 1906, the Edmondson Realty Company purchased 105 acres on either side of Edmondson Avenue, east of Franklinton Road, to erect 1,700 new dwellings. The new development, called Edmondson Terraces, consisted entirely of rowhouses, each oriented on a north-south axis and featuring a small front yard. Today, this area is part of the overlapping Edmondson Avenue Historic District and Greater Rosemont Historic District.

Taking advantage of the popularity of the nearby Edmondson Terraces, local builder David Sagal constructed six Italianate style houses at the intersection of N. Franklinton Road and Lauretta Avenue in 1909. These houses comprise the current Sagal Rowhouses and appear to have been built for white working class homeowners. Each house included a tin roof, plumbing, and furnace heat. The Baltimore Sun described the houses as "modern structures, with pressed-brick fronts and marble trimmings." The four houses on N. Franklinton Road included a front porch and were each 13 by 46 feet. The two Lauretta Avenue houses were 17 by 57 feet, and were built to the sidewalk.

Between 1850 and the 1910s, many Baltimore rowhouses were designed in the Italianate style. Tall windows on the first floor that progressively got shorter on each successive upper-level floor emphasized the façade's verticality. Elaborate cornices, typically supported on consoles and incorporating dentil molding, crowned the buildings. Doorways featured projecting rounded or rectangular frames sometimes supported on brackets above the door. Windows were similarly ornamented with bracketed cornices or cast iron hoods. Cast iron was also incorporated in railings, balustrades, and window boxes. Working-class rowhouses retained the elongated windows, but ornament was simplified. Segmental arches commonly crowned the windows and doors, leaving the cornice as the most decorative element.

Baltimore architect Jacob Gerwig designed the six Sagal Rowhouses. Gerwig was one of Baltimore's most prolific rowhouse architects, and he drew blueprints for hundreds of houses between 1890 and 1920. Like many of Baltimore's rowhouse architects, Gerwig had no formal architectural training but had a successful and productive career. His work ranged from simple, flat-front brick and marble homes in East Baltimore to elaborate bay window, porch-front rows in Peabody Heights (now Charles Village) featuring tiled rooflines and Flemish gables. Among his other designs were swell-front rowhouses completed in the 1890s along Auchentoroly Terrace near Druid Hill Park.

In the early 1900s, taking their cues from suburban single-family houses, Baltimore's rowhouse builders began incorporating spacious front porches on buildings set back from the street and sidewalk by small front lawns. These properties also had backyards. Even though these homes were still within the constraints of rowhouse construction, these small amenities were a way to give potential homeowners a greater connection to the suburban ideal. Typically three stories, each rowhouse featured a single second-story bay window accented with Classical columns and decorative garlands. The three-story rowhouse was typically erected in wealthy, upper-class neighborhoods. Similar stylistic elements were applied to working-class rowhouse communities. Rising only two stories, these rowhouses often included front porches, bay windows, and small front lawns, but lacked the elaborate ornament commonly found in the larger rowhouses. Among the Sagal Rowhouses, Lauretta Avenue's three-bay houses suggest the working-class, Italianate-style Baltimore rowhouse, while the two-bay houses on N. Franklinton Road, with porches and small front lawns, demonstrate the influences of suburban ideals.

When the buildings were constructed, the surrounding area was primarily residential, except for a United Railways and Electric

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Company storage and maintenance facility at the intersection of Edmondson Avenue and N. Franklinton Road. Until 1927, this section of N. Franklinton Road was known as Garrison Lane, and Lauretta Avenue was known as Calverton Road.

Between 1936 and 1953, W. Franklin Street was widened and extended northwest to join Edmondson Avenue. A sudden increase of automobile-related businesses followed the road's expansion; six new filling stations and two garages were constructed near the intersection of N. Franklinton Road and W. Franklin Street. Streetcar service was discontinued in 1954, and the United Railway and Electric Company closed its Edmondson Avenue maintenance facility. In the post-World War II years, increasing numbers of Americans were driving automobiles and the Baltimore transit system was increasingly dominated by buses. By the 1950s, the area was undergoing rapid physical and demographic change. New Edmondson Avenue development turned the area into a commercial corridor. The middle-class, white families that originally occupied the homes began departing for more distant suburbs; nearby houses for sale in the 2500 and 2600 block of Lauretta Avenue were advertised for African-Americans throughout the 1950s.

Today, except for the Edmondson Terrace residences to the northeast, the area surrounding the intersection of N. Franklinton Road and Lauretta Avenue is primarily commercial in nature. Another filling station and a modest commercial strip have replaced the streetcar maintenance facility. Other filling stations stand to the rowhouses' south and west; a bank built in 1949 is located on Lauretta Avenue's north side along N. Franklinton Road. The evaluated buildings continue to function as residences, although 2801 and 2803 Lauretta Avenue and 512 N. Franklinton Road are abandoned. Windows have been replaced with vinyl-clad units, and decorative aluminum porch supports substitute for Classical wood originals. The houses include a variety of new front doors and some transoms have been covered or removed. The main roof of 512 N. Franklinton Road is collapsed, and its porch roof has been removed.

#### Significance Evaluation

The Sagal Rowhouses were evaluated for significance under National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criteria A, B, and C using the guidelines set forth in the NRHP bulletin "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation." The grouping was evaluated as a small district.

The Sagal Rowhouses are associated with Baltimore's late nineteenth and early twentieth century suburban expansion along electric streetcar lines. Unlike housing developments such as Edmondson Terraces, the Sagal Rowhouses is a small development of just a few buildings built as an afterthought due to the success of Edmondson Terraces. It is neither an early example, nor did it introduce any design innovations or influence subsequent rowhouse development. The evaluated property does not have an important association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and therefore it is not eligible under Criterion A.

Since research has not shown that the property is associated with the lives of persons significant in the past, the Sagal Rowhouses are not eligible under Criterion B.

This small development of six rowhouses was designed in the Italianate style which was, at the time, the style of choice (between about 1850 and the 1910s). Most of the residences in the rapidly expanding city of Baltimore were rowhouses. To be eligible, these buildings would need to embody character-defining features that would make the houses good examples of Italianate rowhouse development. This is not the case for the Sagal Rowhouses. The houses are not the work of a master and exhibit common materials and forms which have been altered over time; windows and doors have been replaced, and porches have been expanded or removed. Collectively, these alterations obscure the buildings' historic appearance and their integrity of design and materials. Therefore, because the Sagal Rowhouses do not convey any distinctive characteristics or artistic values and have been

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altered, they are not a representative example of early twentieth century suburban rowhouse development or meritorious Italianate design and are not eligible under Criterion C.

The Sagal Rowhouses were not evaluated under Criterion D as part of this assessment.

Based on the evaluated criteria, the Sagal Rowhouses are not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

#### Works Consulted

"4 Permits Granted by Zoning Board." The Baltimore Sun. 20 June 1928, p. 9.

"Building Many Dwellings: John Muller Will Erect 180 More in Northeastern Baltimore." The Baltimore Sun. 21 April 1905, p. 7.

"Classified Ad 12." The Baltimore Sun. 26 September 1907, p. 8.

"Classified Ad 15." The Baltimore Sun. 13 September 1915, p. 10.

"Comic 1." The Baltimore Sun. 10 July 1951, p. 22.

"Dwellings to be Erected." The Baltimore Sun. 6 June 1905, p. 9.

"For New Apartments: Wylie Heights Company to Erect \$60,000 Structure; First of Type Near the City." The Baltimore Sun. 7 June 1908, p.9.

"Gail Property Sold: Eutaw Place Estate Acquired by Mr. Charles E. Spalding." The Baltimore Sun. 28 April 1908, p. 8.

Hayward, Mary Ellen and Charles Belfoure. The Baltimore Rowhouse. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, c1999.

Henry, Helen. "Reminders of Yesteryear on View Next Week." The Baltimore Sun. 6 May 1979, p. SM50.

"New Era Co. to Build: Will Erect Ten Dwellings on Lakewood Ave., Near Whitelock St." The Baltimore Sun. P. 8.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1901, 1914, 1928.

"To Develop the Briars: Old Caldwell Estate Will Be Known as Eaton Manor; Will Build on Potomac St." September 1909, p. 8.

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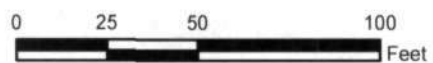
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**Sagal Rowhouses (B-5232)**  
**512 N. Franklinton Road and 2801-03 Laurretta Avenue**  
**Baltimore, Maryland**

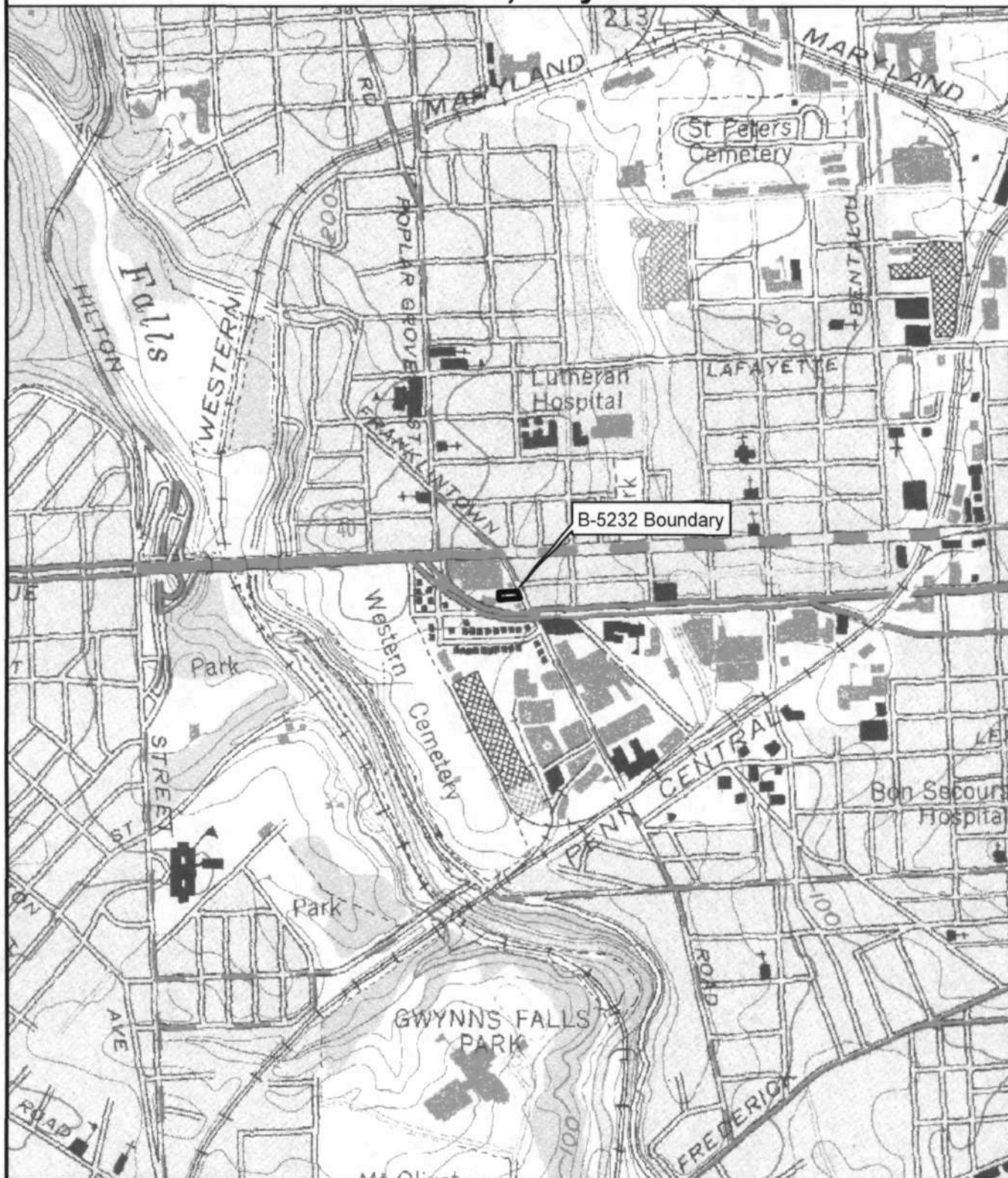


**Site Plan**



May 2012

**Sagal Rowhouses (B-5232)**  
**512 N. Franklinton Road and 2801-03 Laretta Avenue**  
**Baltimore, Maryland**



**Location Map**

0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet

May 2012



## PHOTO LOG

### **B-5232, Sagal Rowhouses**

B-5232\_2011-09-12\_01

-East façade

B-5232\_2011-09-12\_02

-East façade

B-5232\_2011-09-12\_03

-East façade, porch detail

B-5232\_2011-09-12\_04

-North façade

B-5232\_2011-09-12\_05

-West elevation

B-5232\_2011-09-12\_06

-West elevation

B-5232\_2011-09-12\_07

-South elevation, east façade, neighborhood setting

HP 100 Gray Photo ink on HP glossy premium plus photo paper. CD-R Gold.



B-5232

Sageel Robbhouses

512-18 N. Franklinton Road

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/12/11

East facade

1/7





B-5232

Sagal downhouses

512-18 N. Franklinton Road

Baltimore City, MD

C. T. Eniguchi

9/12/11

East facade

2/7

HANDY MAN  
ANYTHING REPAIRED  
OR INSTALLED  
449-527-8515



B-5232

Sequel Rowhouses

512-18 N. Franklintown Road

Baltimore City, MD

C. Toniguchi

9/12/11

East facade, porch detail

3/7

E MONEY





B-5232

Siegel Rowhouses

2801-03 Lauretta

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/12/11

North facade

4/7



B-5232

School rowhouse's

512-18 N. Franklintown Road

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/12/11

West elevation

5/7





B-5232

Sage Rowhouses

2001-03 Lauretta Avenue

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/12/11

West elevation

6/7



**HESS**

REGULAR 353  
PLUS 375  
PREMIUM 381

HESS  
353  
375  
381

WELCH

PUGH

B-5232

Sagel Row houses

512-18 N. Franklinton Road

Baltimore City, MD

C. Taniguchi

9/12/11

South elevation, East facade; neighborhood  
setting

7/7